Horatius Flaccus (Q.)
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25

THE

ART

OF

PREACHING:

In IMITATION of

HORACE's

ART of POETRY.

by
Rob. Dodsley

LONDON:

Printed for R. DODSLEY, at *Tully's Head*, in *Pall-Mall.*

(Price One Shilling.)

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Art of Preaching;

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HORACE's ART of POETRY.

[a] SHOULD ſome ſtrange Poet, in his Piece, affect
Pope's nervous Stile, with *Ward*'s low Puns be-deck'd;
Prink *Milton*'s true Sublime, with *Swift*'s true Wit;
And *Blackmore*'s Gravity with *Gay*'s Conceit;
Would you not laugh? Truſt me that Prieſt's as bad,
Who in a Stile now grave, now raving mad,
Gives the wild Whims of dreaming Schoolmen vent,
Whilſt drowſy Congregations nod aſſent.

[b] The Prieſts, 'tis true, have always been allow'd
To teach Religion, and 'tis fit they ſhou'd;

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[a] *Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam*
Jungere ſi velit, & varias inducere plumas
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
Deſinat in piſcem mulier formoſa ſuperne;
Spectatum admiſſi riſum teneatis amici?
Credite, Piſones, iſti tabulæ fore librum
Perſimilem——

[b] —————*Pictoribus atque Poetis.*

But in that ſacred Name when they diſpenſe
Flat Contradictions to all common Senſe;
Tho' Fools and Bigots wonder and believe,
The Wiſe 'tis not ſo eaſy to deceive.
[c] Some take a Text ſublime, and fraught with Senſe,
But quickly fall into Impertinence.
On Trifles eloquent, with great delight
They flouriſh out on ſome ſtrange myſtick Rite;
Clear up the Darkneſs of ſome uſeleſs Text,
Or make ſome crabbed Paſſage more perplext:
But to ſubdue the Paſſions, or direct,
And all Life's moral Duties they neglect.
[d] Moſt Preachers err (except the wiſer few)
Thinking eſtabliſh'd Doctrines, *therefore* true:
[e] Others, too fond of Novelty and Schemes,
Amuſe the World with airy idle Dreams:
[f] Thus too much Faith, or too preſuming Wit,
Are Rocks where Bigots, or Free-thinkers ſplit.

Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua poteſtas ——
Sed non ut placidis coëant immitia ——

[c] *Incœptis gravibus plerumque et magna profeſſis* ——

[d] *Maxima pars vatum* ——
Decipimur ſpecie recti ——

[e] *Qui variare cupit rem prodigaliter unam,*
Delphinum ſilvis appingit, fluctibus aprum.

[f] *In vitium ducit culpæ fuga, ſi caret arte.*

——— The

[g] The very meaneſt Dabler at *Whitehall*
Can rail at Papiſts, or poor Quakers maul;
But when of ſome great Truth he aims to preach,
Alas, he finds it far beyond his reach.
[h] Young Deacons try your Strength, and ſtrive to find
A Subject ſuited to your Turn of Mind;
Method and Words are eaſily your own,
Or ſhould they fail you---ſteal from *Tillotſon.*
[i] Much of its Beauty, Uſefulneſs, and Force,
Depends on rightly timing a Diſcourſe.
Before the L--ds or C--m--ns---far from nice,
Say boldly---*Brib'ry is a dirty Vice*---
But quickly check yourſelf---and with a Sneer---
Of which this Honourable Houſe is clear.
[k] Great is the Work, and worthy of the Gown,
To bring forth hidden Truths, and make them known.
Yet in all new Opinions, have a care,
Truth is too ſtrong for ſome weak Minds to bear:
[l] And are new Doctrines taught, or old reviv'd,
Let them from Scripture plainly be deriv'd.

---

[g] *Emilium circa ludum faber imus, & ungues*
Exprimet, & molles imitabitur ære capillos;
Infelix opera ſumma, quia ponere totum
Neſciet.———

[h] *Sumite materiam veſtris, qui ſcribitis, æquam*
Viribus,———

[i] *Ordinis hæc virtus erit, & venus, aut ego fallor,*
Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
Pleraque differat; ut præſens in tempus omittat———

[k] *In verbis etiam tenuis cautuſque ſerendis*———

[l] *Et nova fictaque nuper habebunt verba fidem, ſi*
Græco fonte cadant, parce detorta.

Barclay

[m] *Barclay* or *Baxter*, wherefore do we blame
For Innovations, yet approve the ſame
In *Wickliffe* and in *Calvin?* Why are Theſe
Call'd wiſe Reformers? Thoſe mad Sectaries?
'Tis moſt unjuſt: [n] Men always had a right,
And ever will, to think, to ſpeak, to write
Their various Minds; yet ſacred ought to be
The Publick Peace, as Private Liberty.
[o] Opinions are like Leaves which every Year
Now flouriſh green, now fall and diſappear.
Once the Pope's Bulls could terrify his Foes,
And kneeling Princes kiſs'd his ſacred Toes;
Now he may damn, or curſe, or what he will,
There's not a Prince in Chriſtendom will kneel.
Reaſon now reigns, and by her Aid we hope
Truth may revive, and ſickening Error droop:
She the ſole Judge, the Rule, the gracious Light
Kind Heaven has lent to guide our Minds aright.
[p] States to embroil, and Faction to diſplay,
In wild Harangues, *Sacheverel* ſhow'd the way.

---

[m] ——————— *Quid autem*
Cæcilio Plautoque, dabit Romanos, ademptum
Virgilio varioque? ———

[n] ——— *Licuit, ſemperque licebit,*
Signatum præſente nota procudere nomen.

[o] *Ut Sylvæ foliis pronos mutantur in annos* ———

[p] *Res geſtæ regumque, ducumque, & triſtia bella*
Quo ſcribi poſſent numero, monſtravit Homerus.

The

[q] The Fun'ral Sermon, when it firſt began,
Was us'd to weep the loſs of ſome good Man;
Now any Wretch, for one ſmall Piece of Gold,
Shall have fine Praiſes from the Pulpit ſold:
But whence this Cuſtom roſe, who can decide?
From Prieſtly Av'rice? or from Human Pride?

[r] Truth, moral Virtue, Piety, and Peace
Are noble Subjects, and the Pulpit grace:
But Zeal for Trifles arm'd imperious *Laud*,
His Power and Cruelty the Nation aw'd.

[s] Why was he honour'd with the Name of Prieſt,
And Greateſt made, unworthy to be Leaſt,
Whoſe Zeal was Fury, whoſe Devotion Pride,
Power his great God, and Intereſt his ſole Guide?

[t] To touch the Paſſions let your Stile be plain;
The Praiſe of Virtue aſks a higher Strain:

---

[q] *Verſibus impariter junctis querimonia primum,*
Poſt etiam incluſa eſt voti ſententia compos.
Quis tamen exiguos elegos emiſerit auctor,
Grammatici certant, & adhuc ſub judice lis eſt.

[r] *Muſa dedit fidibus Divos puerosque Deorum ——*
Archilocum proprio rabies armavit iambo.——

[s] *Cur ego, ſi nequeo, ignoroque, Poeta ſalutor?*
Cur neſcire —— quam diſcere malo?

[t] *Verſibus exponi tragicis res comica non vult.——*
Interdum tamen & vocem Comœdia tollit;——
Et Tragicus plerumque dolet ſermone pedeſtri.

Yet ſometimes the Pathetick may receive
The utmoſt Force that Eloquence can give;
As ſometimes, in Elogiums, 'tis the Art,
With plain Simplicity to win the Heart.

[v] 'Tis not enough that what you ſay is true,
To make *us* feel it, *you* muſt feel it too:
Show your *ſelf* warm'd, and that will Warmth impart
To every Hearer's ſympathizing Heart.
When honeſt *Foſter* Virtue does enforce,
All give Attention to the warm Diſcourſe:
But who a cold, dull, lifeleſs, drawling keeps,
One half his Audience laughs, the other ſleeps.

[w] In cenſuring Vice be earneſt and ſevere;
In ſtating dubious Points conciſe and clear;
Anger requires ſtern Looks and threatening Stile;
But paint the Charms of Virtue with a Smile.
Theſe different Changes common Senſe will teach,
And we expect them from you if you preach;
For ſhould your Manner differ from your Theme,
Or on quite different Subjects be the ſame,

---

[v] *Non ſatis eſt pulchra eſſe Poemata* ——
—— *male ſi mandata loqueris*
Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo.

[w] —— —— *Triſtia mæſtum*
Vultum verba decent: Iratum, plena minarum;
Ludentem, laſciva; ſeverum, ſeria dictu.
Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem
Fortunarum habitum: ——

Deſpis'd and laugh'd at, you muſt travel down,
And hide ſuch Talents in ſome Country Town.
[x] It much concerns a Preacher firſt to learn
The Genius of his Audience, and their Turn.
Amongſt the Citizens be grave and ſlow;
Before the Nobles let fine Periods flow;
The *Temple* Church aſks *Sherlock*'s Senſe, and Skill;
Beyond the Tow'r—no matter—what you will.
[y] In Facts or Notions fetch'd from ſacred Writ
Be orthodox, nor cavil to ſhow Wit:
[z] Or if your daring Genius is ſo bold
To teach new Doctrines, or to cenſure old,
With care proceed; you tread a dangerous Path;
Error eſtabliſh'd grows eſtabliſh'd Faith.
'Tis eaſier much, and much the ſafer Rule
To teach in Pulpit what you learnt at School;
With Zeal defend whate'er the Church believes,
If you expect to thrive, or wear Lawn Sleeves.
[a] Some loudly bluſter, and conſign to Hell
All who dare doubt one Word or Syllable

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[x] *Intererit multum divuſne loquatur an heros* ——
[y] *Famam ſequere* ——
[z] *Si quid inexpertum ſcenæ committis, & audes*
Perſonam formare novam; ——
—— *tuque*
Rectiùs Iliacum carmen deducis in actus ——
[a] *Nec ſic incipies, ut ſcriptor Cyclicus olim* ——

Of what they call the Faith; and which extends
To Whims and Trifles without Uſe or Ends:
[b] Sure 'tis much nobler, and more like Divine,
T' enlarge the Path to Heaven, than to confine:
Inſiſt alone on uſeful Points, or plain;
And know, God cannot hate a virtuous Man.
[c] If you expect or hope that we ſhould ſtay
Your whole Diſcourſe, nor ſtrive to ſlink away;
Some venial Faults there are you muſt avoid
To every Age and Circumſtance ally'd.
[d] A pert young Student juſt from College brought,
With many little Pedantries is fraught:
Reaſons with Syllogiſm, perſuades with Wit,
Quotes Scraps of *Greek* inſtead of ſacred Writ;
Or deep immers'd in Politick Debate,
Reforms the Church, and guides the tottering State.
[e] Thoſe Trifles which maturer Age forgot,
Now ſome good Benefice employs his Thought;
He ſeeks a Patron, and will ſoon incline
To all his Notions civil or divine;

---

[b] *Quanto rectiùs hic* ———
[c] *Tu, quid ego & populus mecum deſideret, audi;* ———
Si plauſoris eges aulæa manentis, & uſque
Seſſuri, donec cantor, vos plaudite, dicat; ———
Ætatis cujuſque notandi ſunt tibi mores ——
[d] *Reddere qui voces jam ſcit puer* ———
[e] *Converſis ſtudiis, ætas animuſque virilis*
Quærit opes, & amicitias: ———

Studies his Principles both Night and Day,
And as that Scripture guides, muſt preach and pray.
[f] Av'rice and Age creep on: his reverend Mind
Begins to grow Right-reverendly inclin'd.
Power and Preferment ſtill ſo ſweetly call,
The Voice of Heaven is never heard at all:
Set but a tempting Biſhoprick in view,
He's ſtrictly Orthodox and Loyal too;
With equal Zeal defends the Church and State,
And Infidels and Rebels ſhare his Hate.

[g] Some things are plain, we can't miſunderſtand;
Some ſtill obſcure, tho' thouſands have explain'd:
Thoſe influence more which Reaſon can conceive,
Than ſuch as we thro' Faith alone believe;
In Thoſe we judge, in Theſe you *may* deceive:
But what too deep in Myſtery is thrown,
The wiſeſt Preachers chuſe to let alone.
How *Adam*'s Fault affects all Human Kind;
How Three is One, and One is Three combin'd;
How certain Preſcience checks not future Will;
And why Almighty Goodneſs ſuffers Ill;

---

[f] *Multa ſenem circumveniunt* ———

[g] *Aut agitur res in ſcenis, aut acta refertur:*
Segnius irritant animos demiſſa per aurem,
Quam quæ ſunt oculis ſubjecta fidelibus, & quæ
Ipſe ſibi tradit Spectator. ———
——— *in avem Procne vertatur, Cadmus in anguem,*
Quodcunque oſtendis mihi ſic, incredulus odi.

Such Points as theſe lie far too deep for Man,
Were never well explain'd, nor ever can.

[h] If Paſtors more than thrice five Minutes preach,
Their ſleepy Flocks begin to yawn, and ſtretch.

[i] Never preſume the Name of God to bring
As ſacred Sanction to a trifling Thing.

[k] Before, or after Sermon, Hymns of Praiſe
Exalt the Soul, and true Devotion raiſe.
In Songs of Wonder celebrate His Name,
Who ſpread the Skies, and built the ſtarry Frame:
Or thence deſcending view this Globe below,
And praiſe the Source of every Bliſs we know.

In ancient Times, when Heaven was to be prais'd,
Our humble Anceſtors their Voices rais'd,
And Hymns of Thanks from grateful Boſoms flow'd,
For Ills prevented, or for Good beſtow'd:
But as the Church increas'd in Power and Pride,
The Pomp of Sound the Want of Senſe ſupply'd;

---

[h] *Neve minor, neu ſit quinto productior actu*
Fabula.——

[i] *Nec Deus interſit, niſi dignus vindice nodus*
Inciderit:——

[k] *Actoris partes chorus, officiumque virile*
Defendat.——

[l] *Tibia non, ut nunc orichalco vincta, tubæque*
Æmula; ſed tenuis, ſimplexque ——
Poſtquam cœpit agros extendere Victor, & urbem
Latior amplecti murus, vinoque diurno
Placari Genius feſtis impune diebus;
Acceſſit numeriſque modiſque licentia major.
Indoctus quid enim ſaperet, liberque laborum,
Ruſticus, urbano confuſus, turpis honeſto?

Majeſtick

Majeſtick Organs then were taught to blow,
And plain Religion grew a Raree-ſhow!
Strange ceremonious Whims, a numerous Race,
Were introduc'd, in Truth's and Virtue's place.
Myſterious Turnpikes block up Heaven's Highway,
And for a Ticket, we our Reaſon pay.

[m] Theſe Superſtitions quickly introduce
Contempt, Neglect, wild Satire, and Abuſe;
Religion and its Prieſts, by every Fool,
Were thought a Jeſt, and turn'd to Ridicule.
Some few indeed found where the Medium lay,
And kept the * Coat, but tore the Fringe away.

[n] Of Preaching well if you expect the Fame,
Let Truth and Virtue be your firſt great Aim.
Your ſacred Function often call to mind,
And think how great the Truſt, to teach Mankind!
'Tis yours in uſeful Sermons to explain,
Both what we owe to God, and what to Man.
'Tis yours the Charms of Liberty to paint,
His Country's Love in every Breaſt to plant;
Yours every ſocial Virtue to improve,
Juſtice, Forbearance, Charity, and Love;

[m] *Mox etiam agreſtis Satyros nudavit, & aſper*
Incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit:——

[n] *Scribendi rectè, ſapere eſt & principium & fons.*
Qui didicit Patriæ quid debeat, & quid Amicis;

* *Vide* Martin *in the Tale of a Tub.*

Yours

Yours too the private Virtues to augment,
Of Prudence, Temperance, Modeſty, Content:
When ſuch the Man, how amiable the Prieſt!
Of all Mankind the worthieſt, and the beſt.

[o] Tickliſh the Point, I grant, and hard to find,
To pleaſe the various Tempers of Mankind.
Some love you ſhould the crabbed Points explain,
Where Texts with Texts a dreadful War maintain:
Some love a new, and ſome the beaten Path,
Morals pleaſe ſome, and others Points of Faith;
But he's the Man, he's the admir'd Divine,
In whoſe Diſcourſes Truth and Virtue join:
Theſe are the Sermons which will ever live,
By theſe our *Tonſons* and our *Knaptons* thrive;
How ſuch are read, and prais'd, and how they ſell,
Let *Barrow*'s, *Clarke*'s, and *Butler*'s Sermons tell.

[p] Preachers ſhould either make us good or wiſe,
Him that does neither, who but muſt deſpiſe?
If all your Rules are uſeful, ſhort, and plain,
We ſoon ſhall learn them, and ſhall long retain;

---

[o] *Centuriæ ſeniorem agitant expertia frugis;*
Celſi præteriunt auſtera poemata Ramnes.
Omne tulit punctum qui miſcuit utile dulci,
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.——
[p] *Aut prodeſſe volunt, aut delectare poetæ.——*

But

But if on Trifles you harangue, away
We turn our Heads, and laugh at all you ſay.
[q] But Prieſts are Men, and Men are prone to err,
On common Failings none ſhould be ſevere;
All are not Maſters of the ſame good Senſe,
Nor bleſt with equal Powers of Eloquence.
'Tis true: and Errors with an honeſt Mind,
Will meet with eaſy Pardon from Mankind;
But who perſiſts in Wrong with haughty Pride,
Him all muſt cenſure, many will deride.
[r] Yet few are Judges of a fine Diſcourſe,
Can ſee its Beauties, or can feel its Force;
With like Indulgence ſome attentive ſit,
To ſober Reaſoning, and to ſhallow Wit.
What then? Becauſe your Audience moſt are Fools,
Will you neglect all Method, and all Rules?
Or ſince the Pulpit is a ſacred Place,
Where none dare contradict you to your Face,
Will you preſume to tell a thouſand Lyes?
If ſo, we may forgive, but muſt deſpiſe.
[s] In jingling *Bev'ridge* if I chance to ſee
One Word of Senſe, I prize the Rarity:

[q] *Sunt delicta tamen, quibus ignoviſſe velimus* ———
[r] *Non quivis videt immodulata poemata judex.* ———
[s] *Sic mihi, qui multum ceſſat, fit Chœrilus ille,*
Quem bis terve bonum, cum riſu miror; & idem
Indignor, quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.
Verum opere in longo fas eſt obrepere ſomnum.

But if in *Hooker*, *Sprat*, or *Tillotſon*,
A Thought unworthy of themſelves is ſhown,
I grieve to ſee it, but 'tis no ſurprize,
The greateſt Men are not at all times wiſe.
[t] Sermons, like Plays, ſome pleaſe us at the Ear,
But never will a ſerious Reading bear;
Some in the Cloſet edify enough,
That from the Pulpit ſeem'd but ſorry ſtuff.
'Tis thus: there are who by ill preaching ſpoil
Young's pointed Senſe, or *Atterbury*'s Stile;
Whilſt others by the Force of Eloquence,
Make That ſeem fine, which ſcarce is common Senſe.
[v] In every Science, they that hope to riſe,
Set great Examples ſtill before their Eyes.
Young Lawyers copy *Murray* where they can;
Phyſicians *Mead*, and Surgeons *Cheſelden*:
But all will preach, without the leaſt pretence
To Virtue, Learning, Art, or Eloquence.
Why not? you cry: they plainly ſee, no doubt,
A Prieſt may grow Right-Reverend without.

---

[t] *Ut Pictura, poeſis erit: quæ, ſi propiùs ſtes,*
Te capiet magis; & quædam, ſi longius abſtes.

[v] *Ludere qui neſcit, campeſtribus abſtinet armis:*
Qui neſcit verſus tamen audet fingere. Quid ni?

Preachers

[w] Preachers and Preaching were at firſt deſign'd
For common Benefit to all Mankind.
Publick and private Virtues they explain'd,
To Goodneſs courted, and from Vice reſtrain'd:
Love, Peace, and Union breath'd in each Diſcourſe,
And their Examples gave their Precepts force.
From theſe good Men, the Prieſts and all their Line,
Were honour'd with the Title of *Divine*.
But ſoon their proud Succeſſors left this Path,
Forſook plain Morals for dark Points of Faith;
Till Creeds on Creeds the warring World inflam'd,
And all Mankind, by different Prieſts, were damn'd.

[x] Some aſk which is th' Eſſential of a Prieſt,
Virtue or Learning? What they aſk's a Jeſt:
We daily ſee dull Loads of reverend Fat,
Without Pretence to either This or That.
But who like *Hough* or *Hoadly* hopes to ſhine,
Muſt with great Learning real Virtue join.

---

[w] ——— *Fuit hæc ſapientia quondam*
Publica privatis ſecernere, ſacra profanis;
Concubitu prohibere vago, dare jura maritis;
Oppida moliri; leges incidere ligno. ———
—— *Sic honor & nomen divinis vatibus atque*
Carminibus venit. ———
—— *Poſt hos* ———
—— *Animos in triſtia bella*
Verſibus exacuit.

[x] *Natura fieret laudabile carmen, an arte,*
Quæſitum eſt.

[y] He who by Preaching hopes to raiſe a Name,
To no ſmall Excellence directs his Aim.
On every noted Preacher he muſt wait;
The Voice, the Look, the Action imitate:
And when complete in Stile and Eloquence,
Muſt then crown all with Learning and good Senſe.
But ſome with lazy Pride diſgrace the Gown,
And never preach one Sermon of their own;
'Tis eaſier to tranſcribe than to compoſe,
So all the Week they eat, and drink, and doze.
[z] As Quacks with lying Puffs the Papers fill,
Or hand their own Praiſe in a pocky Bill,
Where empty Boaſts of much ſuperior Senſe,
Draw from the cheated Croud their idle Pence;
So the great *H—ley* hires for Half a Crown,
A quack Advertiſement to tell the Town
Of ſome ſtrange Point to be diſputed on:
Where all who love the Science of Debate,
May hear Themſelves, or other Coxcombs prate.

---

[y] *Qui ſtudet optatam curſu contingere metam,*
Multa tulit fecitque puer; ſudavit & alſit ——

[z] *Ut præco, ad merces turbam qui cogit emendas* ——

When

[a] When Dukes or noble Lords a Chaplain hire,
They firſt of his Capacities enquire.
If ſtoutly qualify'd to drink and ſmoke,
If not too nice to bear an impious Joke,
If tame enough to be the common Jeſt,
This is a Chaplain to his Lordſhip's Taſte!

[b] If Bards to *Pope* indifferent Verſes ſhow,
He is too honeſt not to tell them ſo.
This is obſcure, he cries, and this too rough,
Theſe trifling, or ſuperfluous; ſtrike them off.
How uſeful every Word from ſuch a Friend!
But Parſons are too proud *Their* Works to mend,
And every Fault with Arrogance defend:
Think them too ſacred to be criticiz'd,
And rather chuſe to let them be deſpis'd.

[c] He that is wiſe will not preſume to laugh
At Prieſts, or Church-Affairs; it is not ſafe.

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[a] *Reges dicuntur multis urgere cullis,*
Et torquère mero, quem perſpexiſſe laborant,
An ſit amicitiæ dignus:——
[b] *Vir bonus & prudens verſus reprehendet inertes*——
—— *ambitioſa recidet*
Ornamenta; parum claris lucem dare coget:——
[c] *Ut, mala quem ſcabies aut morbus regius urget,*
Aut fanaticus error, & iracunda Diana,
Veſanum tetegiſſe timent fugiuntque Poëtam,
Qui ſapiunt:——
Quem verò arripuit, tenet, occiditque legendo,
Non miſſura cutem niſi plena cruoris hirudo.

Think there exiſts, and let it check your Sport,
That dreadful Monſter call'd a Spiritual Court.
Into whoſe cruel Jaws if once you fall,
In vain, alas in vain, for Aid you call;
Clerks, Proctors, Prieſts, voracious round you ply,
Like Leeches ſticking, till they've ſuck'd you dry.

FINIS.